

SEWER COMMISSION MINUTES

May 19, 2010 Regular Meeting 7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Town of North Smithfield Sewer Commission was called to order on Wednesday, May 19, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. at Kendall Dean at 83 Greene Street.

Roll Call - Mrs. Paul - In attendance was: Mr. DeCelles, Mr. Kane, Mr. McGee and Mr. Connolly. Mr. Wilcox was in attendance. Mr. Nordstrom was absent and Mr. Alvarez was not in attendance. Also not in attendance were Mr. Pendergast and Mr. Erickson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. DeCelles and voted unanimously on a 3-0 aye vote to approve the April 21, 2010 minutes and Mr. McGee abstained from the vote due to him not being present at April's meeting.

REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDANT-Mr. Alvarez

MOTION by Mr. DeCelles, seconded by Mr. McGee to table the report from the superintendent until Mr. Alvarez arrives.

GEREMIA & ASSOCIATES-PAYMENT REQUESTS

MOTION by Mr. DeCelles, seconded by Mr. Connolly and voted unanimously on a 4-0 aye vote to recommend that the town council

approve payment for invoice #19 to James J. Geremia and Associates, Inc. for phase 1B construction administration and resident inspection services for \$2,063.61.

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Kane stated that he has had discussions with the administrator who released this article dated May 12, 2010. The only issue with the article was that the administrator instructed residents to petition the town council to tie into the town sewer system after October 20, 2010.

He has spoken to her and this will be retracted and reprinted as far as the extension part of it, the loans are fine because per the ordinance, the residents come before the sewer commission and the commission at is sole discretion issues extensions for this project.

MOTION by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. DeCelles and Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on a 4-0 aye vote to receive and place the following items on file: A.) Valley Breeze Article Sewer Tie-In Extension and Loans.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Kane submitted the 2010/11 town budget to the town council and administrator and it will be presented at NSES on June 7th. He also reviewed the budget committee recommendations. Mr. Kane is not in agreement with item #4 part of the budget committee's recommendation. It reads as follows:

“Sewer and Billing Enterprise Funds:

A. There are a number of significant problems that must be resolved within the context of these fund operations as follows:

i. Personnel cannot confirm with any reasonable certainty the actual number of users in each system.

ii. The above fact results in the validity of the rates being charged to consumers without definitive basis at least and completely fictitious at most.

iii. There is a discrepancy between the expected revenue from these enterprise funds in that the Contingency is the only visible verifiable number between both budgets. However, the Sewer and Water budget allow for an administrative charge back to the municipal budget this is not accounted for in the amount of about \$22,000. This includes prorated support from the Finance Director, Town Administrator, Public Works, Payroll and Accounts Payable

1. These enterprise funds are supposed to be self-sustaining. Without visibility to this charge

back to the municipal budget reflected in revenue there is a potential double accounting for salaries.

B. There must be a better reconciliation of expenditures between the enterprise funds and the municipal budget going forward.”

Mr. Kane stated that Mr. Pendergast, the administrator, Mr. Alvarez and himself has had discussions about at least item A1 and A2. They

can not confirm with any reasonable certainty the actual number of users and was not in agreement with the rates being fictitious. They can prove with a small margin of error of who is on the system and how many people it relates to and the rate is the amount of users divided by the operational costs and he can't see much discrepancy in that. The town council will review the proposed budget on June 7th.

Mr. Alvarez arrived at 7:09 pm.

May 19, 2010

Mr. Kane reviewed an e-mail received from Mrs. Wojcik and Mr. Nadeau the town solicitor investigated the sealed town council minutes in relation to the Birch Hill/School Street and hoped that he had answered her questions and he will continue to work on it with the town council. Mr. Kane stated that there will not be a public hearing as one of the council members had originally mentioned. There will be an informational session that F.R. Mahoney will present and doesn't quite know when this will happen. This meeting will only relate to grinder pumps and the issues that they have been having lately as far as the grinder pumps physical component problems as such. He had been requested by the town administrator to review and rewrite the letter for the Required Sewer Connection. This involves a resident who is not connected to the system and should be and according to the administrator, the letter is complicated to send out to a resident and she asked that the sewer commission to review

it and edit it and he will e-mail it to all commission members for their review and comment before he forwards it back to the administrator.

Mr. Kane reviewed the chart that was provided to him from Mr. Wilcox from the Narragansett Bay Commission to compare annual rates and where North Smithfield falls. North Smithfield falls in the middle for this year. If the budget is passed the way it is, for this coming year it will go down and will fall near Burrillville and Narragansett area and comparative North Smithfield is in the middle for the town's user rate.

Mr. Kane provided a packet and an overview on everything for the E-1 grinder pumps from F.R. Mahoney. He also noted that with the heavy rains that occurred during the flooding, there were no leaks or problems. He also stated that the Attention Electrician Form will be posted inside each electrical panel box from F.R. Mahoney. An installation check list which is a punch list from F.R. Mahoney that they provided them with so that everyone involved with the installation knows what should and should not be done and a service report from Mr. Cabral. The problem that Mr. Cabral had last month was due to having a very old toilet and the older toilets use a lot more water and more water means that the pump is going to run a lot more.

It wasn't causing any harm. He shouldn't run into any more problems and has been provided other options by Mr. Wilcox how to reduce the amount of water let out by the toilet for each flush. The town administrator requested that the homeowner manual which will be delivered by F.R. Mahoney upon start up which states what you

should do in the event of an emergency alarm and the maintenance of it and repair service should be done only by F.R. Mahoney is what should be done if the power goes out, a service request etc. And he has resolved some issues that some of the residents had with the process including the credit card request from F.R. Mahoney. F.R. Mahoney will receive a list in October of those residents that have an extended warranty and the basic two year warranty and they will enter the information into their data base. From now until October, if F.R. Mahoney receives a call from North Smithfield, they are not to take a credit card number and they will work something out. If it is a non-warranty issue, they will request a credit card number from who is present at the property.

MOTION by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. DeCelles and voted unanimously on a 4-0 aye vote to return back to the item #2 Report from Superintendent since Mr. Alvarez has arrived.

Mr. Alvarez reviewed April's events. On Belcher Avenue, sealed the failed alarm and pulled pump number two and sent it out for repair, which is now placed back in service. It appeared that it had some type of lightening damage. He found some problems with the SCADA and how the panels were wired and the pump control system and Mr. Geremia from Geremia and Associates were informed and they are suppose to come out and rewire the panel and to eliminate the alternator and it is part of their contract. There were five (5) E-One installations and three (3) gravity pumps installed. Also F.R.

Mahoney began the inspecting the pump equalizers and performed the pump start-up inspections. He also visited with Mr. Cabral from 108 Mendon Road with a technician from F.R. Mahoney and with Shawn Kane and as Mr. Kane explained it was an old toilet. The March sewer flows on Alice Avenue were 22,544,470 and for Elizabeth Avenue were 1,271,300.

OLD BUSINESS CONTINUED

Mr. Kane reiterated that if the pump has been installed all the equalizers were rechecked and all have been inspected and if something was wrong with them they have been corrected and should work fine. Any pumps that were sitting in the yard or those that has been dis-assembled and has been inspected and put back together. And any equalizers coming from F.R. Mahoney will also be inspected and they will also be re-inspected by the time they get installed by Mr. Alvarez and by F.R. Mahoney tech that does the start up inspection until the part that needs to be replaced is manufactured by E-1 and distributed to F.R. Mahoney and the other distributors and will take place after that. F.R. Mahoney will replace all of the equalizers through out the town for free and even if it is working fine, it will still be replaced with the newly manufactured part. Whenever that takes place, the town will be notified and homeowners will also be notified and will be installing them.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kane stated that Mr. Wilcox has brought this to his attention that

there are several residents on Green Street who have connected or will connect or are in the connecting process who will not have a grinder pump. There are three (3) gravity connections. The assessment for these individuals once made was his assumption that the assessment includes the grinder pump costs or a portion of the whole grinder pump. He would assume that these residents who do not have a grinder pump would be credited as if they did not connect this year and they would receive a credit for the amount of the grinder pump off the towns cost of the grinder pump.

May 19, 2010

He would assume that these gravity connections would be included in that list and they would not have to go out and buy their own because they don't require one. Mr. Kane continued to say that is something that would go before the town council after the October 20, 2010 deadline along with the whole list of people who have not connected at that point in time.

Mr. DeCelles asked if there was a different assessment for those individuals.

Mr. Kane replied that everyone has the same assessment however if they tie in after October 20, 2010 of this year, per the ordinance they would receive a \$2,700 and change for the credit of the towns cost of purchasing a grinder pump and then after October 20, 2010, the

resident if not connected would have to purchase a grinder pump directly from F.R. Mahoney at the market cost whenever they decide to tie in and if they are granted an extension through the sewer commission over the next four (4) years.

Mr. McGee asked where the gravity fed connections are.

Mr. Wilcox stated that they are located at 4, 8, 10 and 14 Green Street.

Mr. Kane stated that his assumption would be to remove that cost from their assessment as if for those who didn't connect by the October 20, 2010 deadline and the town doesn't have to buy a grinder pump. The credits that were given is if they tie in the first year, they don't pay a sewer permit fee which is \$200.00, they wouldn't pay the plumber or electrical inspectors fee which are \$26.00 each and if a resident doesn't tie in the first year, they would get a credit for the town cost for purchasing a grinder pump. The cost of design for phase 2 and 3 were removed and spread throughout the town. If residents want to tie in after the October 20, 2010 deadline, they would have to petition the sewer commission for an extension and which has to be done soon. All of them will have to be filed with him and the commission will have to review and come to a decision and it is the sewer commission's sole discretion is final unless it is appealed with the town council. And the article stated that any questions, can be deferred to Mr. Wilcox and he will forward those questions on to him. Right now he expressed that there are

approximately 120 residents who haven't connected as of yet and there is only one resident requesting for an extension so far and he reviewed the criteria that has to be met for those having properly working septic systems. The very last day for those residents to connect requesting an extension is October 20, 2014 and going from October 2009 to October 20, 2014 and that will be a five (5) year tie in period.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bob Thurber of 20 Brian Avenue asked a follow-up question to last month's meeting whether or not if Halliwell was connected to the system and if that has been determined?

Mr. Kane stated that they are still looking into it. He will be scheduling a meeting with the superintendent and the new facilities director.

Mr. Thurber asked what the 10 year maintenance extension is or is there a maintenance schedule?

Mr. Kane stated that there isn't any actual maintenance. The ten year maintenance takes place after the five year warranty. What will be worked out in the coming months is what the town will pay for. If the town will pay for the labor for a service call, or if the town will pay for labor and materials and that has to be decided by the town council because they decided on the whole discretion of the warrantees.

Mr. Thurber asked if the warranty has been drawn up yet.

Mr. Kane stated that the warranty is final for five (5) years and covers everything and it is a manufacturer's warranty. What the town would do is enter into another five (5) year warranty with F.R. Mahoney to provide service to these pumps and the town may pay a certain amount towards the service call, towards material whatever will be required. But those fine details are being worked out for the warranty for the first five (5) years are complete.

Mr. Thurber asked if everyone's assessment will be the same even after removing the four (4) residents who don't have grinder pumps in the Green Street area.

Mr. Kane explained that the grinder pump \$1m bond is separate from the \$4.7m general obligation bond but are paid out of the same assessment so everyone will be paying the same assessment. The grinder pump bond is \$1m for all three phases. The town is only borrowing for what the town needs to cover the costs to whoever connects in the first year. The balance of the bond will be paid off right away and whatever is left with will be paid by the users who actual connect this year. And those residents will have the same assessment as anyone who connects after October 20, 2010 of this year. After the October 20th date the town council will issue a credit as they said in the ordinance.

May 19, 2010

Mrs. Diane Wojcik of 7 Lincoln Drive wanted clarification regarding an informational meeting on the grinder pumps vs. a meeting about the roads and asked Mr. Kane who had said that to him.

Mr. Kane replied that it came from the town council.

Mrs. Wojcik asked if they don't connect this year, do they pay a user fee or don't pay a user fee until they connect.

Mr. Kane stated that was correct.

Mrs. Wojcik said that she knows of two residents who never tied in and are paying their assessment as well as their user fee from the very beginning.

Mr. Kane stated that he will clarify it with the solicitor. But the intent was that if you did not connect, you wouldn't pay a user fee because they are not actually putting waste into the system.

Mrs. Wojcik asked about two separate items. The first was how come there are two separate items for Halliwell School, located at 358 Victory Highway one being for an assessment for \$7,826.00 yearly and the other is for \$4,362.00 yearly.

Mr. McGee thinks that they are not tied in.

Mr. Kane wants to wait to comment until he meets with the superintendent from Halliwell School. He is unsure of what they pay and don't pay until he can clarify with the collections department and with them, he would rather wait to answer.

Mrs. Wojcik asked if Mr. Kane would e-mail her with the response.

Mr. Kane replied that he would and he has been trying to meet with the superintendent for over a month so it probably will be over the summer, once the school year ended.

Mrs. Wojcik asked do payments for these assessments come from the school department's budget, if not do they come directly from the town's budget and where can she find a line item that would explain how the town pays for these two assessments.

Mr. Kane stated that it should come directly from the school department's budget. It should be under property operations maintenance.

MOTION by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on a 4-0 aye vote to adjourn at 7:48 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Paul

Secretary